

VALLEY OF THE MARNE COVERED WITH GRAVES

Wire Fences, Iron Crosses and Flags Mark Resting Places of Fallen Soldiers.

Acy-en-Multien, Department of the Oise, France, Aug. 4.—Since the fourteenth of July, in many of the smiling fields of the "Isle of France," fresh, tricolor flags have thrust their standards proudly above the browning stalks of ripe wheat. On almost every sunny hillside, in almost every valley between the Marne and the Aisne, in the growing barley, the alfalfa, the clover, at the roadside, the chesters under fruit trees, the red and blue of France like a more vivid four-de-lys, pale the poppies and daisies and corn-flowers that springle growing grain.

For here, ten months ago, the battle of the Marne was fought, and here today, the fields are sown with graves each with its four posts thrust solidly in the ground with wire stretched between to mark the spot where some soldier lies. No farmer ploughs above them, though his field be patch-worked with hundreds of the tragic mounds, as many fields are. More, he cuts the weeds or the aggressive grain from every one, even those of the invaders, and every one is marked with its cross or its headboard.

Not the French graves alone are marked. The burial place of every German fallen in battle has its own fence about it. It is kept free of concealing verdure and is marked with its cross. The only distinction is in the color of the crosses. The French are white, and the Germans are black. And on each is printed a number, the number of the regiment to which the dead belonged. There is seldom anything else. Now and again, where the name of the man was known, where his being an officer served to identify his body, the name is on the cross, and a wreath from his comrades or his family who have made pilgrimage to the spot where he lies. Otherwise, he is only a soldier of France, and all soldiers of France are equal in life as in death.

On the fourteenth of July the Countryside of this part of the Republic, which since the days of the Capets has been known as the "Isle of France," was scattered with living people, soldiers on leave from the front, young widows in heavy black leading little children, older people bowed with age and sorrow, come a long way, stumbling along the sunny roads, peering into the fields, all searching for their own.

Most of these searching groups carried new flags to replace the wind-washed and sun-bleached emblems that had marked the graves since the battle of the Marne. Some of the comrades carried many, one for the grave of each man of his regiment who died on the hilltop, or who lies buried in the valley. When he returns to his regiment, "down there," in the trenches, after his leave of absence, the "pollu" tells those of the regiment who remain that each grave he could find of theirs has a brand new flag on it and that it was thus he spent the national holiday.

Next before the entrance to the Cemetery of Acy-en-Multien is a tomb, not unlike many others in the hills and valleys that lie between the Marne and the Aisne. It is perhaps sixty or seventy feet long—so long that there was not room for it within the cemetery walls. Like the smaller graves, it, too, is surrounded by a wire fence, and new flags and flowers, constantly renewed, decorate it. At one end is a temporary cross of iron, upon which is this legend: "Here repose 72 soldiers of France, fallen on the field of honor in September, 1914. They recaptured Acy from the Germans, they contributed to the victory of the Marne, which saved France."

Here, almost every day there comes to this peaceful village, and to many like it throughout the "Isle of France," slender figures muffled in heavy black. They kneel beside such long, common graves and pray a while. The approaching visitor uncovers. The kneeling figure at last looks up.

"Your husband, Madam?" "Perhaps," she answers wistfully. "It was his regiment and he was killed here—somewhere hereabouts, at least." Still kneeling, she runs her hands lightly along the wire that separates her from the mound, as if it were the body of her beloved, covered perchance with the glorious tricolor. Her eyes, as they look out over the radiant hills and beyond, gleam unshed tears.

"For France!" she says, very softly.

RAILWAYS IN ASIA MINOR BEING RAPIDLY DEVELOPED
Berlin, Aug. 4.—The railway development of Asia Minor is being pushed forward rapidly. The latest issue of the Official Gazette at Constantinople publishes a decree granting the minister of war a credit of \$7,500,000 for work on four main and two branch lines, all under military control. The principal line is from Angora to Erzurum. Another runs from Erzurum to a point on the Black Sea, a third from Muradi to Fodos to and a fourth from a point on the Erzurum railway to the Black Sea.

Whole High School Class Had Job on a Farm.
Farm and Fireside says: "A high school class in agriculture at Glendale, Arizona, last year planted an acre patch of cotton on which the pupils grew 2,340 pounds. Although they had to sell for the shockingly low price of four cents a pound they made a profit of \$25.30. Ten and would have given the \$1,000."

Baptism of Fire Greeted Mr. Harry Mestayer's Entrance In Motion Picture Plays

Harry Mestayer is one of the most prominent actors on the American stage. He has assumed leading roles in many important stage productions and comes from a line of theatrical people. He has written herewith his experiences as a leading man in the Selig Red Seal play, "The Millionaire Baby."



HARRY MESTAYER.

"Two years ago if anyone had approached me with a contract to appear in motion pictures I would have turned down the offer. And yet, like many other actors, I have seen the light. The change of heart was not compulsory, for I came to realize that in motion pictures of higher class the conscientious actor has as great an opportunity for artistic work as on the spoken stage. I considered at some length, too, before I affiliated permanently with any motion picture concern, and I chose the Selig Polyscope company because of the enviable reputation attained by the Selig spectacular productions and the artistic environments made possible by the careful supervision of Mr. William N. Selig.

"When I started to work in 'The Millionaire Baby' in the Chicago studios of the Selig Polyscope company I was also appearing in the lead in a dramatic production on the speaking stage at one of the leading theaters in that city. This placed me under quite a strain and all I did for several weeks was work and sleep—and very little of the latter. I was at the studio every morning at 8:30 and worked steadily until 5 or 5:30 in the afternoon. Then I rushed downtown and, after a rather hurried supper, sped to the theater in time to appear on the stage at 8:15.

"It was quite an experience to be working in two characters which were themselves so different and which

to enter the shack. Suddenly, however, the flames leaped up, fanned by a breeze which suddenly swooped down on us, and the other player and myself found that we were within the four walls of a blazing furnace, the door having caught fire, too.

"Our first impulse, naturally, was to make our escape in the quickest manner possible, but both of us realized that if we did it would require the rebuilding of the shack and repeating of the many efforts we had in getting the scene to the point we had reached, so we determined to make an effort to carry out our parts in the gamest manner possible. We rushed through the flames to the door and then with my fellow player I staggered through the door and out in front of the camera, where we both fell exhausted. When I saw the picture I easily understood why the director told us we had done very well, for the way we both sank to the ground was realistic in every detail.

"This scene also called for a rain effect and the water pouring down upon us added to our discomfort. This is merely one incident of the dangers to which a picture player is exposed. I would not have gone through that much in ten years on the stage, but the fact that I now can have my own home and keep regular hours every day more than makes up for all.

"I presume most of my readers know that 'The Millionaire Baby' was adapted to the screen from the story by Anna Katherine Green, and I am sure that those who have read the works of this noted writer will agree with me when I say that her plots are more baffling than those created by any other writer of the present day. There were scenes in the production where the slightest show of any kind of emotion would have disclosed the denouement and ruined the entire effect of the picture, so you can imagine how I felt at first playing close up to the camera and having to hold every muscle of my face tense when I had been used to being far away from the audience, with the footlights between us, where facial expression is a secondary consideration.

"This is one of the causes for many



"I Have Saved Him!"

were presented through such widely different mediums, and this novelty relieved the monotony of such a steady grind.

"I will try to tell you some of the interesting things which occurred during the filming of the big scenes for 'The Millionaire Baby.' The first one that comes to my mind, and one which I will remember for a long, long time, was a fire scene in which I was supposed to rescue another actor, who was playing the part of my employer, from a burning building. Our director tried using smokepots, but these did not give the realistic effect which he desired, so he determined that the shack which had been erected in the large yard of the studio would have to be burned and that the two of us who were to appear in the scene would have to undertake what is termed by the players 'a stunt.' In other words, we would have to run the risk of being injured for the sake of realism.

"The other player was placed in the shack and the fire started. The 'business' of my part called for my rushing into the building and carrying the other man out through the smoke and flames and 'off' the scene. Oil was sprinkled on various parts of the shack, but not around the door through which we were to exit while I was doing the 'rescue.' All appeared to be going nicely as I made my way past the camera and started

failures of stage stars when they appear before the camera. They fail to realize that everything they do is recorded by the camera and that a slip which might go unnoticed on the stage will ruin a whole scene in a film drama and possibly spoil the entire production if it is not retaken. One of the most difficult scenes in 'The Millionaire Baby' was the one in which the child is stolen. The skill of handling this so as not to 'kill' the whole story depended more upon the men who re-touched the film after the director had finished with it than upon the players, and I understand that these men worked till the wee small hours several nights in succession.

"Had the players who supported me in this production been other than they were I do not doubt but what my lot would have been anything but an enjoyable one, but as it was we were just like one big family from the very moment we began work. It was this perfect team work in the many trying scenes that gave the film the finished effect which I am sure will prove a delight to audiences wherever it is shown. I have nothing but praise for all the players and the director and, above all, for William N. Selig, the man who is behind the many splendid productions presented by his company, and whose orders to his directors are: 'Make a picture regardless of cost and make one that they will remember.'"

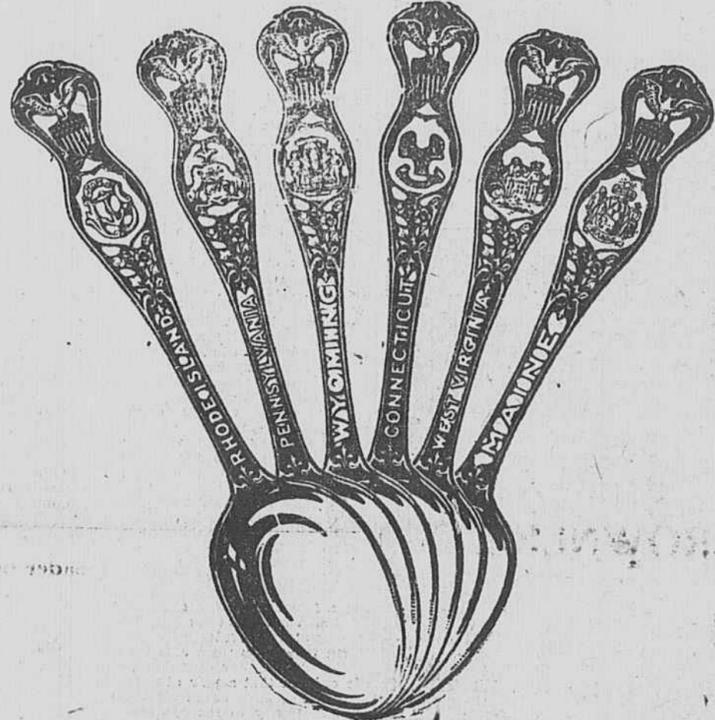
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